

California

Citizen Corps Annual Report



News about Citizen Corps and CERT.

Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism



Tools such as Citizen Corps Councils and Community Emergency Response Teams are emerging across the state in large numbers to provide action-oriented solutions to emergencies. It is our responsibility—and our honor—to be the stewards of this program for California and to support every man, woman and child, as they solidify the bonds that make the fabric of our society strong and secure. We offer you this first annual Citizen Corps report as a testament to the resolve of Californians to make a difference.

*Building safer
and more prepared
California
communities.*

From the Executive Director

California is in the midst of a monumental change—a change that is bringing people together with their neighbors, their communities and their local governments for a common goal: citizen-based emergency preparedness and response. Californians, along with the rest of the nation, were shocked by the devastating effects of 9/11. But from the ruins of the World Trade Center a steadfast resolve has emerged throughout America and California is rising to the challenge and leading the effort. It is not in our nature to shy away from controversy or setback. We will always honor the memory of our fallen heroes with action. In every corner of our state we have seen evidence of this positive resolve: communities are coming together and bridging gaps between citizens, first responders, community leaders, volunteer organizations, business enterprises and service groups.

Marie Moretti
Executive Director

*Citizen Corps
An Overview*

Shortly after 9/11 occurred, President George W. Bush launched a new national initiative to allow every American the opportunity to “take charge” and participate in homeland security and emergency preparedness in their homes and communities. The national Citizen Corps Initiative has four charter programs; Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Neighborhood Watch, and Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS). These programs are designed to provide all Ameri-

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State Citizen Corps Council Members, Partners and Affiliates

American Radio Relay League
American Red Cross
Business and Industry Council for
Emergency Planning and
Preparedness
California AmeriCorps Alliance
California Association of Counties
California Association of Fire
Fighters
California Association of Senior
Corps
California Chiefs of Police
Association
California Conservation Corps
California Crime Prevention
Officers Association
California Department of Aging
California Department of Education
California Department of Forestry
and Fire Prevention
California Department of Health
Services
California Department of Mental
Health
California Department of Social
Services
California Earthquake Authority
California Emergency Services
Association
California Federal Executive Board
California Grocers Association
California Junior Chamber of
Commerce
California National Guard
California Office of Attorney
General
California Office of Emergency
Services
California Office of Homeland
Security
California Peace Officers
Association
California Service Alliance
California Sheriff's Association
California Tribal Nations Emergency
Management Council
California Utilities Emergency
Association
Collaborating Agencies Responding
to Disaster
Community Agencies Disaster Relief
Effort
Corporation for National and
Community Service
Emergency Medical Services
Authority
Emergency Network Los Angeles
Federal Emergency Management
Agency
Fire Chiefs Association of California
Good Night Child Empowerment
Network
Heroes On Call
International Association of Citizens
on Patrol
Law Enforcement Volunteers of
California

cans with the opportunity to better prepare themselves, their families, and their communities.



CERT programs train communities in basic first aid; how to assist firefighters and local law enforcement during disasters; and how to develop family emergency plans.



Medical Reserve Corps volunteers include practicing and retired physicians, nurses, health professionals, as well as individuals interested in medical support. These volunteers' skills are coordinated to address their community's ongoing public health needs and to help their neighborhood in the event of an emergency situation.



Neighborhood Watch engages local communities to better protect themselves by monitoring their local neighborhoods and report any suspicious activity to law enforcement agencies.



The VIPS program (also known as Citizens on Patrol, Community Policing Programs, and others) is the premier law enforcement support resource assisting agencies administratively and helping sworn officers to better perform their frontline duties.

The Citizen Corps Initiative also has one other key element: Citizen Corps Councils. A Citizen Corps Council is each community's umbrella organization designed to combine the efforts of skilled first responders, dedicated volunteers, and community leaders. While the composition of each Council differs, all include representatives from local government, volunteer organizations, first responders, and the community at large. Whether in a small neighborhood or at the county level, Citizen Corps Councils provide a vital opportunity for everyone to communicate, train, and leverage talent before an emergency occurs.

November 2002

GO SERV Launches Citizen Corps

As an element of the Governor's Office since the mid-'90s, GO SERV's overarching role is to promote service and volunteerism statewide through multiple initiatives—primarily as the state portal for California's AmeriCorps grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service; the Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning program to engage K-12 students in service and learning activities that honor the life and work of Chavez; and as of 2002—the Citizen Corps program for Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. This unique position allowed GO SERV to strategically design the Citizen Corps program from the start with other public safety grants in its existing portfolio of community based initiatives.

As the state lead, GO SERV works closely with both state and federal Departments of Homeland Security, the Corporation for National and Community Service, state Office of Emergency Services, California's Tribal Nations and 58 counties to implement the Citizen Corps programs. In 2002, GO SERV became the Point of Contact to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the first grant — \$1.66M for Councils and CERT; in 2003 the appropriation was \$1.49M for CERT only; 2004 gives \$2.7M for all Citizen Corps programs.

*California's Citizen Corps
Design
Building upon
successful systems*

When California's program first began, there were 12 uncoordinated Citizen Corps Councils, 46 CERT programs, and no Medical Re-

serve Corps groups. As of January 2004, California had 43 Citizen Corps Councils (primarily at the county-wide level), 112 CERT programs, and over 20 Medical Reserve Corps'—12 of which received \$50,000 "demonstration grants." Many more of these programs are in development, along with new Law Enforcement volunteer groups. FEMA's national web site credits over 10 million Californians having access to Citizen Corps programs.

A key goal for the first year of Citizen Corps was to—first and foremost—develop a design consistent with California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). No new initiative would be endorsed and incorporated by the first responder and governmental community if not completely integrated into the state mandated structure. To facilitate this integration, GO SERV offered population-based grants to all 58 counties and the Tribal Nations. Workshops around the state launched the effort in early 2003, which brought together local partners such as AmeriCorps programs, Volunteer Centers, Law Enforcement and Fire Services, Red Cross chapters, CERT programs and business leaders—to name a few. GO SERV's methodology towards developing Citizen Corps is captured in the following approach:

Vision:

Uniting Californians through volunteerism to build safer communities.

Mission:

The mission of the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism is to strengthen California against disasters and emergencies of all kinds through aggressively implementing the state's Citizen Corps program and engaging the power of individual volunteerism by providing consistent leadership, training, service opportunities and technical assistance that will create stronger, safer, and better prepared neighborhoods and communities.

Special Thanks

A special recognition is due to California's Native American organizations. Through the efforts of the Inter-Tribal Council of California, a new "California Tribal Nations Emergency Management Council" was formed, representing the 109 federally recognized Tribes in California. This body serves as the statewide Tribal Citizen Corps

Council as well, and has a seat on the State Citizen Corps Council facilitated by GO SERV. Citizen Corps funds through GO SERV and FEMA planning grants through CA OES helped make this landmark, national model a success. The CTN-EMC mirrors the state's SEMS structure in an overlay that simultaneously preserves Tribal sovereignty while allowing for statewide emergency management consistency with other governmental partners. CERT trainings, Citizen Corps education, and a series of emergency planning workshops statewide have been accomplished in this first year.



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State Citizen Corps Council Members, Partners and Affiliates Continued...

League of California Cities
Los Angeles City Fire
Los Angeles County Fire
National Civilian Community Corps
National Crime Prevention Councils
Nextel Communications
Northern California Voluntary
Organizations Active in Disasters
Ready to Respond
Retired Senior Volunteer Program
Sacramento County Sheriff
Salvation Army
Save a Life Foundation
Southern California Voluntary
Organizations Active in Disasters
State Chancellor's Office –
California Community Colleges
State Chancellor's Office –
California State University
University of California
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Volunteer Centers of California
Youth Service California

Stakeholder Development and Special Projects Colloaborative Ownership

Successful projects do not occur in a vacuum. At the outset, GO SERV worked closely with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CA OES), Governor's Office of Homeland Security, and FEMA to ensure that all of

California's interests, communities, agencies and groups had the opportunity to participate in Citizen Corps development.

The State Citizen Corps Council was formed before the first local guidance document was released to aid in program and policy creation. Consisting of every major sector in the emergency volunteer field—local, state and federal government; voluntary agencies and associations; service groups; first responders and the business sector—this group has begun to address key concerns in

California, including liability issues for Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, developing a consistent CERT program for the entire state, and standardizing the process for authenticating new Councils consistent with SEMS.

The most active effort within the State Citizen Corps Council was convening a CERT workgroup to discuss future goals for California's CERT program. With the effort starting in Los Angeles in the early 1980's, CERT went "national" and is now evolving in its home state to be tailored to California's diverse needs. The workgroup has now identified several areas to concentrate CERT efforts, the primary being the "T-4" concept, also called an instructor academy. This instructor academy effort plans to more than triple the number of qualified CERT instructor trainers in the coming year.

Challenges are always part of new program development and California's experience was no exception. One such issue was how to untangle the "alphabet soup" of programs and options at the local level and how they interact both during and after disasters. As a local organizer, should I form a CERT program or a

Citizen Corps Council? Should I start a VOAD or VIPS program? To solve this, GO SERV convened a meeting of all involved sectors, determined the positions and policy issues in a collaborative fashion and published the results on its web site. Similarly, many groups approached local and state governments about starting Citizen Corps programs—but even with resource materials available, it can be unclear how to take the first step. GO SERV commissioned a project with a prominent community-based organization to develop a Citizen Corps toolkit as a resource for all start ups, also available on the GO SERV web site.

The preliminary work to develop Citizen Corps has ensured is ultimate success. No more perfect example exists than Fresno city's Citizen Corp Program. Fresno has more than 100 volunteers who serve on the Council's board and various committees and their effort leverages grants and programs involving VIPS, Medical Reserve Corps, CERT, and Neighborhood Watch. The Fresno Council was invited to the White House for the launch of the National Citizen Corps Council. In addition, Fresno is a member of FEMA's "Best Practice" workgroup.

CERT

The Backbone Program

In 2003, California's CERT programs trained more than 10,000 people. GO SERV funded CERT programs are encouraged to target their CERT training to their most vulnerable, underserved and least prepared communities. In order to increase the number of trained community members, GO SERV organized 7 CERT Train-the-Trainer (T-T-T) courses to teach more than 200 new CERT instructors. T-T-T courses were held in Sacramento, Fresno, San Mateo, Mendocino, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, and Humboldt, with additional CERT T-T-T courses scheduled through the middle



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of 2004. T-T-T courses are offered in partnership with the Los Angeles City Fire Department and local emergency management agencies. In one year, the number of CERT programs has risen from 49 to 112 and GO SERV expects this number to exceed 150 by the middle of 2004. The second half of 2004 will be dedicated to the “T-4” initiative, as well as tailoring new optional modules valuable to California—such as a new Wildland/Urban Interface mitigation and response element.

Communications and the web

From the start, electronic communication was the tool by which GO SERV disseminated information. The GO SERV web site (www.goserv.ca.gov) was up immediately with Citizen Corps and CERT information. Guidance documents, best practices, and CERT materials are available on the site for public consumption. On-line quarterly reporting for grantees was initiated in the second quarter and on-line workshop registration and surveys were also utilized. A monthly electronic newsletter began mid-year with great success.

As part of the evolutionary process to create a historical record in California of volunteers in the emergency and homeland security field, GO SERV began an effort late in the year to document the numbers and uses of volunteers involved statewide. Using on-line surveys, direct research, grantee reporting and, a database of volunteer and service resources will take shape in 2004.

The Southern California Wildfires An Early Test

Almost one year after Citizen Corps began in

California, the worst firestorm in the State’s history erupted. The devastation was huge, with thousands of homes being consumed by fire and 22 people losing their lives. The volunteer and service sector responded in support of local government by assisting with donations management at the State Operations Center, supporting local assistance centers for victims, and providing foreign language interpreters. CERT Teams, VOADs, AmeriCorps members, Red Cross and VIPS representatives took part in the effort. GO SERV helped California OES by setting up a clearinghouse for non-traditional service and volunteer resources as well as providing donations management expertise. As with all disasters, lessons were learned that will benefit future responses—and drove many of the efforts now underway in the 2004 grant cycle. The Governor’s Blue Ribbon Panel will issue a final report on the 2003 Firestorms in mid 2004 that is expected to contain input from the Service and Volunteerism sector that was facilitated by the State Citizen Corps Council organization.

Institutionalization and Expansion The Next Steps

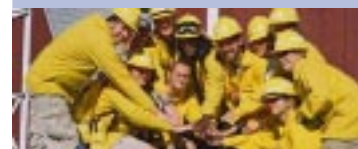
The 2004 Citizen Corps grant has been combined with 2 other larger grants as part of the Department of Homeland Security’s new streamlining effort. This new approach offers key opportunities for expansion of Citizen Corps efforts in California. Projects at the County level can be leveraged from larger sources of homeland security funding to maximize community-based program enhancements. And with the requirement for grantees in California to have Local Councils become “working” units, as well to develop strategic plans and local annexes for utilizing service and volunteer resources in emergencies—by 2005 a new paradigm of permanent, institutionalized involvement of Citizen-based planning and re-

“GO SERV is a model for how Citizen Corps Programs can be implemented in our states and local communities.”

—Jeff Griffin, Director
FEMA Region IX

“GO SERV has given us the opportunity to better prepare those communities in the most need.”

—Constance Perett,
County of Los Angeles



sponse organizations should be realized.

Grant management will continue to be a major focus in the coming year. For most of 2004, the 2002, 2003 and 2004 grants will be simultaneously administered in many California com-

munities. Although challenging, GO SERV will nonetheless accelerate its efforts including: expanding the scope of the State Citizen Corps Council and key partners and affiliate organizations; developing state and local volunteer resource management plans; and, designing tools and best practices that allow for in-

creasing Citizen Corps Councils, CERT, and related community-based organizations statewide.

Law Enforcement volunteer programs and new Medical Reserve Corps will be given special attention as well. With the numerous but uncoordinated law enforcement volunteer support groups statewide—VIPS, Neighborhood Watch, COP, and others—there is a strong need to help them develop in a coordinated manner that is consistent with SEMS and new state and federal initiatives. Medical Reserve Corps in California has the benefit of a dedicated state coordinator now; the result of a proposal in the first year to link the Centers for Disease Control focus on surge capacity in their bioterrorism grant with volunteer efforts in Citizen Corps. This new dedicated seat in California's Emergency Medical Services Authority will spearhead a coordinated, statewide effort to develop every new MRCs with consistent policy standards, operational procedures, and SEMS compatibility.

Our goals for 2004 are aggressive: GO SERV

will pursue 100 active Citizen Corps Councils; 150 CERT programs; 35 Medical Reserve Corps'; and dramatically increased overall numbers statewide for citizen involvement in homeland security and emergency preparedness.

Looking Back and Moving Forward

California Citizen Corps' first year was a resounding success and launched efforts to ensure long-term institutionalization. Across the grant cycles, the counties and Tribal Nations received funding and began the program development process. California's benchmark emergency framework—SEMS—was incorporated into the Citizen Corps design, allowing for increased compatibility at all levels of planning and response. 2003 served as a test year and 2004 will serve as a time to institutionalize Citizen Corps. The ability of California's citizens to protect themselves, their families and their communities depends on all of our efforts. Along with all of our partners, GO SERV looks forward to the challenge of ensuring that every Californian feels safe and prepared in the event of a disaster or emergency.



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